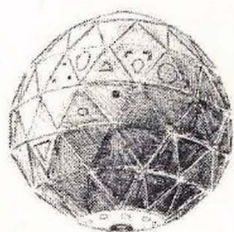


THE

PROBE

REPORT



**THE MAYAN
CONNECTION ?**



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MRS. JULIE MRZYGLOD:	TREASURER/SECRETARIAL.
MIKE SEAGER:	MAUFOG CORRESPONDENCE.

COVER ILLUSTRATION: IAN MRZYGLOD

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M.A.U.F.O.G.

16 Marigold Walk,
Ashton,
Bristol. BS3 2PD.

UFO Research Organisation

Tel, 0272 666270
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EDITORIAL COMMENT

(ISSUE 5)

JUNE 1981.

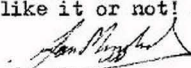
IS IT WORKING ?

When this magazine was first launched a year ago, none of us at PROBE really knew where it was going or what was intended of it. At that time, we were known as NUFOR (SOUTHWEST), a group formed from the remnants of UFO INFO, at the request of the NUFOR organisation in Brighton. The magazine, going under the name of PROBE, seemed an obvious means of getting ourselves known and established as a UFO investigation and research body both amongst other groups and the public in general. So issue No. 1 was published last June and then followed an extensive drive to distribute it amongst the various organisations throughout the UK and abroad, which virtually exhausted the finances of the four members. There was a mild ripple of response; a few remarks about how interesting it was..... not bad..... nice cover..... and then nothing. A few people sent in requests for subscriptions which was vital for the survival of the magazine, but all the costs were being met from our own pockets. None of us minded this at all, because whatever interest you take in a subject, there are always costs to incur, be it a licence, permit, membership, or expense for equipment. No hobby really comes free these days, so the costs were not begrudged.

Was this really working though? Was the magazine communicating the right information to the right people? It was difficult to say, because the readership ranged from experienced ufologists and authors to the member of the public with a mild interest, and both extremes had to be satisfied. Unfortunately, we had little constructive or critical comment during the first six months and we couldn't print a letters page until the fourth issue. This obviously meant that we were not receiving any opinions on how the magazine was being accepted, if at all, and were more-or-less going it alone. Happily, people are putting pen to paper but this really is in response to other people's criticisms, but a few constructive remarks are coming in.

But a vital question still to be investigated is whether or not 'The PROBE Report' is necessary. It is common policy within some groups not to publish a journal because it takes up vital time and energy that could be otherwise employed doing research and investigations. This of course is true to an extent, but providing these vital avenues of ufology do not suffer, then a magazine should be produced if possible. After all, if there are no magazines, then the research side of ufology would suffer through lack of source material. Within PROBE, the magazine task is handled by one person alone, so that leaves all the others to carry out their individual chores, plus allowing time for all of us to investigate cases when they occur. In a nutshell, PROBE feels that this magazine is necessary, as a method of communication to let everyone else know we are still here.

'The PROBE Report' has received criticism, not in the form of constructive comment or letter, but in cutting remarks about how much profit we are making. This hurts, because this magazine runs at a loss, when you take into account all the printing and postage costs, but that is not always appreciated. "You must be making a bomb if you can print a glossy magazine" is a common one. How can you win? If we stencilled a magazine and produced it cheaply, we would be attacked by some for having the nerve for charging for it: produce an expensive one and we are making a killing! The only reasons for producing the glossy format magazine are; 1) Saying thank-you to those who have supported us from the beginning, and 2) attempting to produce something that would be accepted by the scientific media and the authorities. They are always impressed when something looks expensive. Whatever people think, we are going to be stuck with 'The PROBE Report' for the time-being anyway, like it or not! All the best.


Ian Mrzyglod. Editor.

NEWS

ROUND UP

First of all, contrary to what was reported in the last issue, the DEPT. of FORENSIC ANALYSIS has had to be closed permanently. After reporting the setting-up of this organisation, a letter dated 16/3/81 was received explaining that it will now go under the name of the UFO RESEARCH CENTRE and will hopefully continue UFO research and investigation as an elite group. The address remains the same, namely 2 Morris Street, Birtley, Co. Durham.

It is always sad when a UFO group or magazine folds, and unfortunately it has happened again. A letter from Mike Timmis of SEARCH (WEST) of Melksham, Wiltshire, told us, "Sadly, due to lack of funds and the dying enthusiasm of my colleagues, SEARCH (WEST) magazine will be published no more. Subscribers will receive any money that is due to them". On the other hand, it is encouraging to hear of new groups forming. When SKYWATCH of Swindon folded as told last issue, several members decided to carry on and so created the SWINDON UFO STUDY GROUP, based in Pinehurst, Swindon. They have already started some investigations in their area and it will be interesting to see what transpires.

'Can a Flying Saucer Fly?' was published last issue as an extract from Brian Smith's complete work, entitled 'Zen & The Art Of Flying Saucer Maintenance'. At the moment, plans are being made to publish the article in full, complete with diagrams and full illustrations including paintings by Brian himself. It would not be in the same quality paper as this magazine is produced, but nevertheless should make an interesting supplement. The price will depend on the response, so those interested please let us know.

PROBE's next exhibition has been set for 8th August at the Rachel Fowler Centre, Melksham Wiltshire. With an attendance of roughly 350 last year, we aim to top that by building some new exhibits that are still at the planning stage. The giant flying saucer model will still be there though.

Ken Rogers and the British UFO Society hit the local TV, radio and newspapers with a big publicity drive to advertise his weekend skywatch cottage in Warminster. The television spot on HTV did ufology no good whatsoever especially when a local postman, who is also a keen skywatcher, was asked if anything had been seen lately. He replied, saying it had been quiet, except for the other day when a 'star-like' object as big as two houses, hovered at a height of about three houses above where he was standing! And that is quiet?

Anti-gravity devices seem to be all the rage at the moment with two organisations striving to get off the ground. UFO INTERNATIONAL are at present involved in building a device which incorporates 738 U2 batteries, and inventor John Searl of the NATIONAL SPACE RESEARCH CONSORTIUM appeared in the Daily Star with his non-working model of a flying saucer after giving a seminar to 50 experts. Unfortunately, his previous six working models all flew away, and this latest one flew by means of dangled fishing line. However, he will build a 2,000 seater giant saucer if someone gives him £30million.

Hopefully, despite the editor marrying Julie Blake, the group's secretary and treasurer, the editorial policy of 'The PROBE Report' should not change. This wedding took place on May 16th and so far the editor has come through unscathed!

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M4 UFOs

by Ian Mrzyglod.

Case Ref: P5-80/ID.

Introduction: Through some correspondence late last year with Jenny Randles, UFOIN coordinator and NUFON secretary, an incident involving the observation of nocturnal lights came to light. We requested further written details of what actually happened on the M4 heading west just past junction 16 near Wootton Bassett, Wiltshire. Taken from the written report, presented here are the details.

Jenny Randles and her fiancé, Paul Whetnall were returning by motorcycle to Cheshire after visiting the Farnborough air show and were heading west towards Bristol on the M4. They had just passed Swindon and had crossed the A420 turn off at junction 16 which leads to Wootton Bassett and Avebury, famous for its stone circle. The time was 21.15 on the 6th September 1980.

The incident: "Suddenly, in the south I saw a brilliant white light. It was at about 20 degrees elevation just above the hill-line, which I could make out, although there were no lights of a town or village that I could see. My immediate reaction was that it was an aircraft having switched on its landing light as I quite distinctly saw the light burst from nowhere into existence. I watched interested in the spectacle, smiling to myself about silly witnesses who misinterpret such things! Then the light split in two, and the two objects drifted apart slightly, although maintaining the same elevation. They were now clearly separate. Had they been lights on the wing tip of aircraft, for example, they would have been almost on top of us, but subjectively I felt these were over the hilltop perhaps two miles south of us. Even now I simply watched with interest, not amazement, but then the two lights exploded silently and flared into incredible intensity far in excess of any landing light (magnitude -5 or -6 at least I would guess).

I now tapped Paul on the shoulder, although we were doing 50 or 60 mph and could not stop, of course. He watched what he could, without taking concentration off the road, and slowed down a little. In fact he had already seen the lights before I pointed them out.

We moved away past the lights but did see a third light come from out of the right-hand one so that now there were three, still hovering, in a wide triangle formation and all very bright. We had them in view perhaps a minute until our motion made it impossible to look back and see them. Just before I lost sight I believe I saw the right end one (the one which had appeared last) wink out suddenly. We stopped at the next service station and compared notes. We agreed on what we had seen. On looking at the map we could find no obvious source in the vicinity such as airport or military base, but knew that such things were plentiful in the area and that flares were often seen from the Warminster/Stonehenge area a few miles west. The possibility of these lights being parachute flares was the only logical one we could come up with, but that was as far as we could go. We dismissed the incident from our minds and decided it was best to leave it to local ufologists to tell us what we saw. If they were flares I did not realise that on a reasonably windy day (as this was) they could hover in one place for so long. If that is the case then I can well appreciate why they are so often regarded as UFOs."

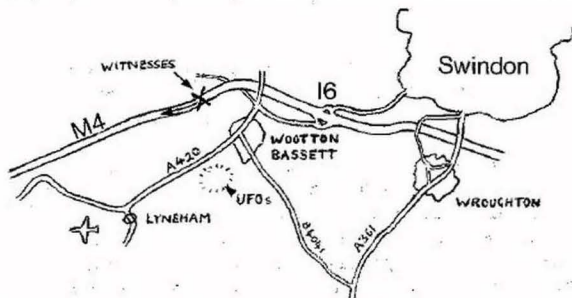
Investigation: The first thing we did was to obtain the detailed weather conditions for the area at that particular time. Taken from Boscombe Down readings, from 19.00 to 23.00 the wind remained a southerly light. Visibility was good with a range of 40km. Cloud details were 2/8 Stratocumulus with a base of 1500 feet above ground level. The temperature started at 16 degrees C falling gradually to 13 degrees C by 23.00. The mean sea level pressure was 1021mb remaining steady.

Living in the area, we had a good idea of what military establishments are in the immediate vicinity, and RAF Lyneham is about 4 miles southwest of the witnesses' position, and we discovered that the area pinpointed as the likely spot for the lights to have been situated, is on the approach path to RAF Lyneham, and aircraft crossing over this spot would be fairly low-flying.

Because of the nature of such military activity, it is extremely difficult to gather information concerning particular manoeuvres at any time, but we did manage to get an affirmative nod when we enquired as to whether or not any aircraft were airborne at 21.15. We were not told what the aircraft was or what it was doing, from logical deduction we assumed that the aircraft was almost certainly a Lockheed Hercules C130 H, as used by RAF Lyneham, and the most common aircraft seen in the sky in that particular area. As Jenny pointed out in her report, she thought the lights were far too bright for landing lights, so alternative lights had to be examined.

The Hercules carries lights in its undercarriage bays and on the nose, and if these are all lit, then from the ground, a triangle formation would (or could, to be more precise) be seen. Unfortunately, the formation of the triangle of lights as seen by the witnesses would make this situation improbable, considering the first light split in two. At this stage, an aircraft could have caused that as it turned face-on, but as for creating a third from the right-hand light, this becomes difficult.

These suggestions were put to Jenny who politely rejected the aircraft theory, referring to her report which stated that if this was the case, then the aircraft would have been almost on top of them. Without more specific information from the military, we could not pursue this angle any further, considering that we only assumed the aircraft in circuit was a Hercules in the first place. The flares theory did seem plausible to an extent, as the development of the many ranges and types of flare now in use is quite substantial, but then again, this was impossible to verify for obvious reasons.



The Final View

Conclusion: To try and find an answer by claspng at straws is the wrong attitude to take in UFO investigation. If a reasonable case is put forward for an explanation to a sighting which has factual backing, letters of confirmation of aerial traffic, precise distances and heights, then it is fair to apply that solution. But in this case, data is so difficult to obtain, that to use the Hercules or flare to 'identify' the lights for the sake of identifying them to fit into the 99% explainable category would be improper. Investigation into the lights has now gone as far as is reasonably possible, and the case has been classified, 'Insufficient Data'.

**CASE
CLOSED**

THIS ISSUE FEATURES A CASE WHERE POSSIBLE PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE FOR THE EXISTENCE OF UFOS WASN'T QUITE WHAT IT APPEARED TO BE.

In the earlier part of March this year, PROBE were sent a selection of photographs from a lady living in Wells, Somerset. The letter which accompanied the photo read as follows: "I received PROBE Report Vol 1, No 4 on Wednesday last, and enjoyed reading it. Please refer to your article, 'Lost: Two UFOs'. Very interesting and puzzling. Later on Wednesday I was idly looking at the prints in envelope 1, (see Fig. 1) and quite suddenly began to ponder on the splodge of light in the pictures. I didn't recall noticing any brilliant light outside the window at any time. With your article in mind I set up an experiment and tried as absolutely as near as possible to repeat the first group of photographs. No light appeared. I have also checked with the people in the house across the road with no result. I simply cannot account for the splodges of brilliant light in the photos. Is this lens flare, or have I (jokingly) found your two UFOs?"

We examined the photographs in envelope 1, and in envelope 2, and noticed that the angles at which they were taken varied slightly. Figure 1 shows the best of envelope 1, where the bright blob of light is clearly visible to the immediate right of the floral display, and it particularly relevant that the photographer was standing square to the window when the shot was taken. The camera used was a Polaroid 1000 with SX-70 land film. Flash cubes were also used. In the second batch, referred to above as envelope 2, the experimental photographs were taken in a position at an angle to the window and this seemed to be why the blob of light failed to appear.



FIGURE 1. One of the photographs from envelope 1 showing the 'splodge' of light immediately to the right of the floral decoration. This was the best shot which showed the light more clearly.

We wrote back, returning the photographs, and also suggesting a further set of experiments to try and reproduce the effect. Only this time we recommended removing the floral display from the window and trying again only making sure that she was standing more squarely to the window itself.

**CASE
CLOSED**

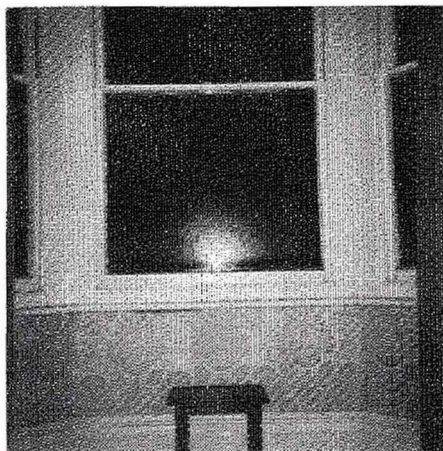


FIGURE 2. The final experimental photograph showing the flash bulb reflection, enhanced by the removal of the floral decoration, and by standing square to the window.

A couple of days later, Figure 2 arrived through the letterbox with a short note pointing out that it needed only one attempt to reproduce the 'splodge' of light on the window. It was a simple case of flash bulb reflection and it was clearly evident on the final experimental photograph (Figure 2) when the decoration was removed.

We wrote back once more asking if this case could be used in the CASE CLOSED series to illustrate a photographic misinterpretation, and received a reply giving us this permission but with one condition: "I would rather you did not publish my name and address as the whole episode was so very easily explainable. I feel a bit of a 'Charlie' and my family and friends already think of me as a bit dim anyway!"

ADVERTISEMENTS:

WANTED: 'Warminster Mystery' by Arthur Shuttlewood, either hardback or paperback edition. Please state price and condition to 'PROBE', 16 Marigold Walk, Ashton, Bristol. BS3 2PD.

SKYWATCH is full of national and international UFO news, sightings, readers' letters, articles, adverts. Contributions/paper clippings always welcome on any UFO-related subject. Full credit given. Membership and subscription to MAPIT-SKYWATCH is £3.00 (six issues). Single issues 35p incl. p & p. Back issues available. Write to David Rees, Mapit-Skywatch, 92 Hillcrest Road, Offerton, Stockport, Cheshire. SK2 5SE.

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UFOs AND THE LIMITS OF SCIENCE by Ronald D. Story. 245 pages. Price £5.95.

Ronald Story has written some good books in the past, including the classic 'Space-Gods Revealed', and has scored again with this work. In order to present a strong objective case for the UFO, the author conducted a survey in which he asked roughly ninety 'leading ufologists' to select the case in which they thought contained the strongest evidence. Due to poor results, he selected his own top-ten and in this book provides detailed accounts of the ten cases, which needless to say include the Betty and Barney Hill abduction, the New Zealand TV film of December 1978 and the Father Gill sightings in Papua, New Guinea (1959). I was also pleased to see Tehran jet-chase case featured here, where two Iranian F-4 Phantoms were involved with a high-speed chase which resulted in instrumentation and communication blackouts. An extremely useful feature is the section on photographic computer analysis which explains the various processes used by such organisations as GSW: not many know exactly what 'colour contouring' or 'digitizing' mean, or how effective and reliable such analysis is. Each chapter is concluded with valuable source notes which is a good sign, and although there may not be a great deal here which is new to the experienced ufologist, the presentation and purpose is commendable. One final note:- why did Ronald D. Story select his own ten best cases? 70% of those ufologists contacted refused to put forward a case, and the other 30% lacked any consensus.

THE SPACE-GODS REVEALED by Ronald D. Story. Paperback. 85p.

Mentioned above as being a classic, this is the book which made the claim, 'The Chariot of the Gods turned into a pumpkin', and it does just that! First published in 1976, it heads the list of New English Library reprints as an excellent book in which the author took an objective view of Erich von Daniken's 'evidence' and dismissed it as such, a view which is on the increase. An antidote to the von Daniken pseudoscience.

UFO-UK by Peter Paget. Paperback. £1.00

If you have a great deal of patience you should just about manage to get through this book, because it seems to be an endless, monotonous list of UFO reports which are not put in any particular order and in the end, tell you nothing. The level of investigation is certainly questionable, and I sincerely hope that the next UFO-group leader who may turn his hand to writing makes a better job.

PHONE CALLS FROM THE DEAD by D. Scott & Raymond Bayless. Paperback. £1.00.

An intriguing book on a subject which is apparently more common than one would imagine. Two years of research by the authors revealed many cases of where people received telephone calls from various friends and relatives, only to later discover that the callers had previously died. The authors admit that they are nowhere near solving the mystery of these calls, but nevertheless it makes fascinating reading. Sounds like another subject I know!

SECRETS OF THE LOST RACES by Rene Noorbergen. Paperback. £1.00.

Using the evidence uncovered by Erich von Daniken to back up his Gods From Outer Space theories, Rene Noorbergen has applied it differently to suggest that the mysterious artifacts and structures were in fact created from our 'primitive' ancestors here on Earth, and not from an Extraterrestrial race. Noorbergen speculates that humankind developed a technology far superior to the present day level, and his case is more plausible than the ETH viewpoint.

HARMONIC 288 by Bruce Cathie. Sphere Paperback. £1.50.

This book is the third by the author and further explores the theory of a world power grid based on lines of magnetic force. We do not consider ourselves good enough mathematicians to comment on Cathie's calculations, however, the author's theories will stand

or fall on the validity and accuracy of them, in which he seems confident. This book is interesting in that it devotes space to those hoary old favourites, Telsa and the Great Pyramid, and it will be interesting to see whether or not Cathie's further research branches out into other esoteric lines, especially since Cathie, by the very nature of his theories and by his allegations that certain people in high places have attempted to dissuade him from further research, has added a new dimension to the various conspiracy theories now current. An interesting book for the mathematician and for the scientifically minded.

PSI PSYCHIC DISCOVERIES BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN by Sheila Ostrander & Lynn Schroeder. ABACUS (Sphere Books). Paperback. £1.95.

In 1968 the authors were invited to the First Annual Parapsychology Conference in Moscow, and this work tells of the research being undertaken in Russia, Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia at that time. This re-issued volume covers a wide range of aspects on the parapsychology theme; telepathy, ESP, dowsing, UFOs and Kirlian photography are all dealt with here. In the short chapter on UFOs, Dr. Felix Ziegel of the Moscow Institute of Aviation reveals that research is being undertaken on many "Well documented sightings from every corner of the USSR". The sightings are discussed briefly but sadly contains nothing new for the experienced ufologist. The authors themselves admit that they had no experience of UFOs before going to Russia, and it shows. This book will appeal to the reader who has a limited knowledge on psychic effects, as the experienced researcher will be familiar with most of the contents.

HANDBOOK OF PSI DISCOVERIES by Sheila Ostrander & Lynn Schroeder. ABACUS (Sphere Books). Paperback. £1.95.

From the authors of PSI Psychic Discoveries Behind The Iron Curtain, we have a useful handbook that is designed to encourage readers to take part in their own psychic experiments, and it explains the basic principles of conducting these experiments. The authors have compiled this volume as a handbook with index to enable the reader to study one particular aspect without continuous reading. The book is packed with useful information like how to make inexpensive dowsing rods from coathangers by cutting two thirty four inch lengths of coathanger wire and bending each eight inches from the end to form an L shape, and goes on to explain how to use them in the correct way. Anyone wishing to experiment with things like plants, Kirlian photography, group telepathy and energy-tracking techniques will welcome this re-issue. This book comes highly recommended.

YOUR INNATE PSYCHIC POWERS by Jean Burns. Sphere Books. Paperback. £1.50.

This 276 page new issue is described as 'The complete guide to telepathy and the psychic arts' and is designed to help the reader to develop his or her psychic potential. The author tells us that we all have latent power within us that can be developed with the aid of certain techniques. Dr. Burns relates her own experiences and observations to present day theories and beliefs to provide the reader with a challenge to follow the many exercises outlined at the end of each chapter. This often heavy subject is written in a clear style that gives credit to the author. Every person interested in the psychic arts should own a copy of this new book.

WHO WERE YOU? by Roger Elliot. Granada. Paperback. £1.50.

For those of you who believe in past lives, this book will be great fun. It goes much further than the horoscopes in the daily newspapers and uses astrology as just one method of determining who you were before. If you have the time and the patience, you can sit down and work out in fairly accurate(?) detail the kind of person you were centuries ago.... if you really want to know.

WAR IN 2080 by David Langford. Sphere Books. Paperback. £1.50.

What happens when a physicist-turned-SCI-FI author takes a futuristic at warfare in the year 2080? The result is a pretty frightening prospect. Most of the destruction would be construed from space with armed satellites and other potent hardware. Still, if we have to wait until 2080 for our next war, I for one will be content.

CRADLE HILL PHOTO'S

by Ian Mrzyglod

Warminster, perhaps more than any other place in the world, has been the subject of much controversy over its association with UFOs. From the mid 1960's onwards, hundreds of reports came from the small Wiltshire town, and unfortunately many of them were the result of hoaxes or gross misidentification. Because of this, respectable Ufologists scorned Warminster and it was ignored. But nevertheless, reports continued to emerge from the townfolk and the faithful band of skywatchers who still manned the hilltops. Amongst the masses of stories that were all put down because of the reputation, there were many genuine accounts of unusual aerial activity which were all tarnished with the same brush, where many witnesses of reliable character were witness to the unexplained. One such event took place in October 1978.

James Rose, a professional photographer, took a series of three shots in rapid succession of a single light from Cradle Hill, Warminster, and the result was far from what was anticipated. Mr. Rose's account detailed:

'These shots were taken within a few seconds of each other and obviously something odd is going on. In figure 3 if you look carefully at the light cluster on the left you can just make out the sources. I have blown up this area (fig. 5) and reversed it which gives a much clearer view. The photographs all appeared to the eye to be a single white light source constant or flashing. All the photographs were taken and processed by me in late 1978, and I can guarantee that they are genuine. 35mm 2475 recording film was used and processed in DK50 developer. Prints were obtained in the normal way. I have been a professional photographer for over ten years.'

Further details obtained from Mr. Rose were that the camera was a TOPCON 35mm SLR. The lens used was a TOPCON 135mm telephoto. The 2475 Recording film is manufactured by Kodak with an exposure index of 1000 and this particular sequence was developed for 45 minutes in DK-50 at 70°F instead of the suggested 9 minutes. The shutter speed was set for 30th second with an aperture of f/4. The camera was mounted on a heavy professional tripod.



Figure 1.

The First of the Series.

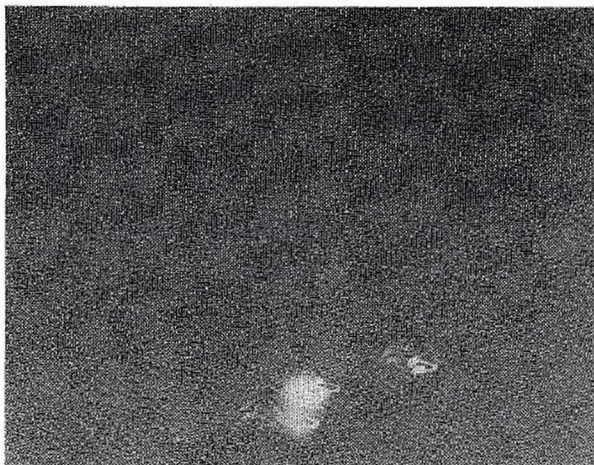


Figure 2.

The Second of the Series.

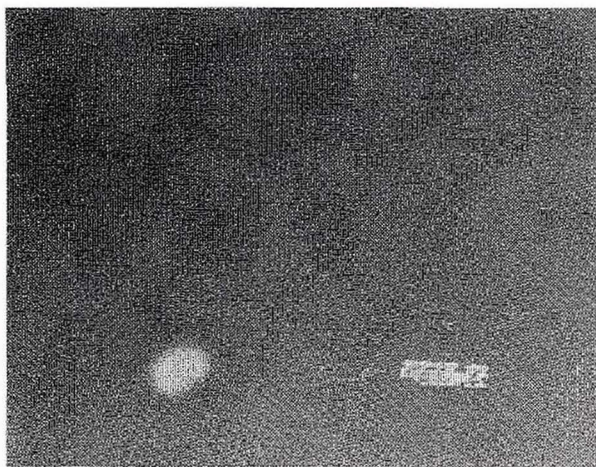


Figure 3.

The Final Photograph.

It is evident that a certain degree of camera-shake has caused the uniform shape of the lights on each frame, but this has been enhanced by the blow-up process. An interpretation of the light forms can be seen in fig. 4, where the movement has been ignored. It is difficult to identify each light source due to the hazy areas on the photographs, but it can be established that the formation of lights in both figures 1 & 2 are very similar, if not identical, but figure 3 is a different case altogether. A close study of figure 5 shows that there was movement within the bright source (on the left in figure 3), which bears a resemblance to the movement within the unusual strip of lights on the right. It can not, however, be stated as being identical because of the complexity of the strip. But it is obvious that the light sources photographed in figure 3 are not in the same formation.

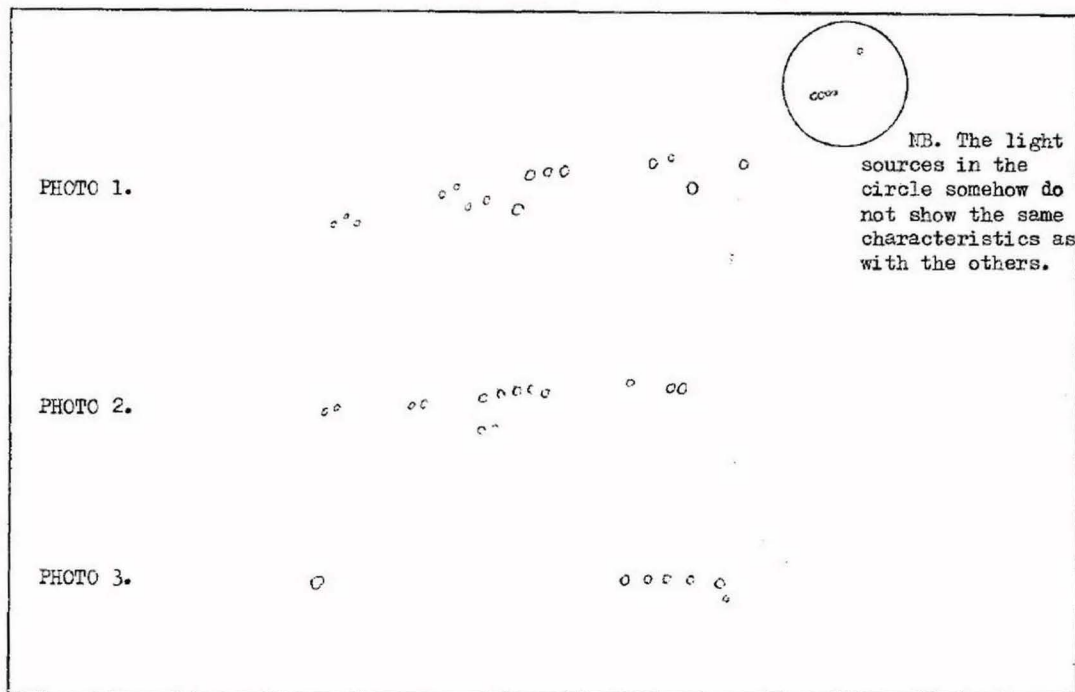


Figure 4. Interpretations of the light-forms from the three photographs, attempting to ignore the camera-shake. The results are not truly accurate due to the hazy areas on the photographs.

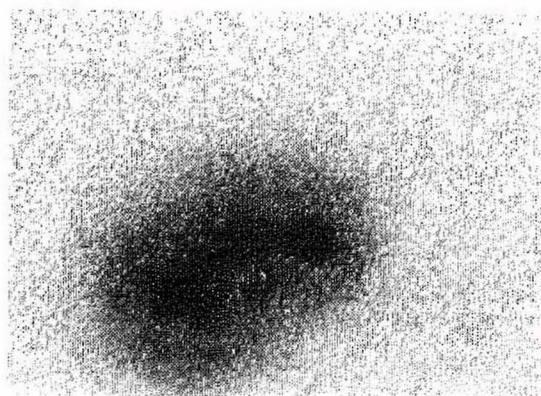


Figure 5. Blow-up and reversal of the bright light cluster in Figure 3. Note the dark areas in the centre, depicting possible movement of the camera.

An immediate reaction from anyone viewing these photographs for the first time would be to suggest street lights as the cause, but that angle was investigated. Mr. Rose added that the photos were taken in the direction of Cop Heap, an ancient burial-mound lying in a southwest direction from the white gates on Cradle Hill, the famous skywatch point. Hazarding a guess at the angle of elevation of the camera, Mr. Rose suggested 40°.

A night-time survey of the area revealed that there were street lights beneath and in front of Cop Heap, but these were at an angle of about 10° below the horizontal. But in order to compare these lights with Mr. Rose's photographs, a five-second exposure was taken using ordinary Ilford FP4 film. The object of this exercise was not to compare the photographic Procedure carried out by Mr. Rose, but merely to obtain photos of the relevant street lights. During this exercise, a full panoramic view of Warminster's lights was taken but the only lights which bore any resemblance were in fact the ones situated beneath Cop Heap. (See figure 6).

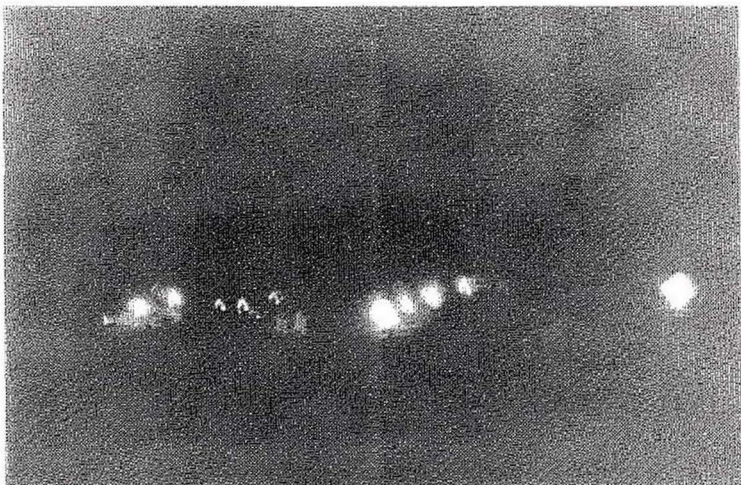


Figure 6. The lights beneath Cop Heap. Note the camera-shake.

A close analysis shows that this resemblance is only partial, and that the light forms photographed by Mr. Rose are not these street lights, or any others visible from Cradle Hill.

Conclusion: To determine exactly what was photographed would be a mammoth, if not impossible task. Mr. Rose clearly stated that a single light source was photographed, not a formation such as in the resultant prints. In other words, only one light was seen, not necessarily meaning that only one light was present. Ultraviolet light is invisible to the naked eye but does register in a fuzzy image on the emulsion. Of course, many methods exist in which to create photographs of this effect, from waving torchlights to using multiple exposures of the moon, but this case must be excluded from that category. Mr. Rose is a professional photographer and has offered these photos for analysis leaving people to make their own minds up. For him to have claimed the photographs as portraying UFOs would have roused suspicion and his reputation may have been at stake. As far as we can establish, the photographs show an unknown light source(s) of varying brightness that at present defy explanation. No-one is claiming they are UFOs but this case does illustrate that there are genuine reports coming Warminster despite its reputation that the 'wooly thinking' has spread from the sheep on the hillsides to the ufologists (to quote an old issue of FSR, Vol 17 No 2).

SIGNALS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Mr. Mrzyglod,

I read with interest your two articles on the Westbury Circles in the PROBE Report, issue Nos. 2 and 3, but I cannot agree with your conclusion that a tornado funnel cloud was responsible on three separate occasions in the same geographical area in the space of about two months. This is taking coincidence too far, because tornados are very much rarer phenomena than fair-weather whirlwinds. Current statistics show that tornados are reported in Wiltshire only two or three times each decade, whereas hundreds of minor whirlwinds are seen every summer. Moreover, the great majority of tornados rotate anticlockwise, and clockwise-turning ones are extremely rare. Contrary to the Met. Office advice mentioned on page 7 of your second article, weather conditions on 30th July (as on 31st) appeared perfect for summer whirlwind formation. My own Trowbridge weather notes show that good days also occurred in the third week of May and on 20-24th and 27-28th July. Another important point is that whirlwind diameters up to 20 metres (60 feet) are common. I have seen two myself with this diameter, and I have also seen one with a diameter of 40-50 metres, ('Weather' vol. 36, 47-48, 1981). A fuller account of my preference for a whirlwind explanation is given in the Journal of Meteorology, vol. 6, No. 57. (March 1981).

Dr. G. T. Meaden. Editor Journal of Meteorology, Cockhill House,
Trowbridge, Wiltshire.

Dear Editor,

Brian Smith's "Can a Flying Saucer Fly?" was the best article I've read so far, tempered by an attitude of open-minded tolerance sadly lacking in some correspondents in your readers' letters columns. After reading the unkind personal views expressed, giving individual names, I can well understand why so many magazines of UFO nature have failed and closed-down since the enigma first came into prominence with many truly inexplicable experiences at Warminster in 1964. This petty back-biting and petty criticisms of individual research students led to closures of a funny so-called UFO magazine on Merseyside, another by a sly hoaxer in Surrey unfrocked at Copheap, Warminster, subsequently termed SIUFLOP! What a pity that such vicious character assassins cannot tell us what and who UFO intelligence comprises..... On form, these misguided gentry will surely be among the last to be acquainted with cosmic truths? I'm so glad my article in your No. 3 issue was considered by a know-all reader to be "ramblings that ought not to be published!" I'm so relieved! It might interest Mr. Rees that it (the relevant information and statistical data) was formulated by Maurice Chatelain, a NASA scientist and technician responsible for master-minding the design of the first Apollo spacecraft. It might also educate the said Mr. Rees and vitriolic Mr. Rimmer to know that a local farmer captured two genuine UFOs on his colour film, shortly to be released worldwide. It will astound numerous half-doubters that UFOs do exist, are real and factual aeroforms! The cynical doubters should contact our local police in Station Road; several personnel will assure questioners that reliable witness accounts can be supported over alleged UFO sightings since that Christmas period over 16 years ago! And why should Rod James be accused of hypnagogic hallucination or berated for no personal data being provided? He is a responsible college lecturer, his father our town's master baker. Watch the "know-all" magazine staff dwindle again in the near future. Yours truly,

Arthur Shuttlewood, author 'More UFOs Over Warminster' (Arthur Barker).

Dear Mr. Mrzyglod,

I like your magazine very much, especially the 'SIGNALS' page, but I am very sorry you did not gently edit the letter from David Rees whose remarks regarding Mr. Shuttlewood were unnecessarily crushing. He did, after all, spend so many hours investigating UFOs that it appears to have wrecked his physical health. It was his book on UFOs which brought me into the scene, and his accounts of his "Flying friends" activities have made as good reading as anything in the bible, and of course, are more up-to-date. Having said all that, I will state that I am the original 'doubting Thomas' and will not believe anything I cannot see for myself. Wishing you good hunting!! Yours sincerely,
Mrs. Clare Stewart, Wells, Somerset.

Dear Ian,

I would like to comment on one or two points raised by David Rees in your last issue, concerning my recent article 'Astronaut Sightings - Where Is The Evidence For Extra-terrestrial Craft?'. David describes the article as "naive", and in my dictionary that means 'simple to excess'. However I must point out that the article was supposed to be simplified for the benefit of the many members of the public that subscribe to the magazine. It was never conceived to reveal startling new evidence for the experienced ufologist. One of the main points that have impressed me about 'The PROBE Report' is the wish to provide material acceptable to the general public and ufologists alike, and so create a well-balanced magazine. As for David's comments on the lack of source material, I can reveal that over the years I have collected rather a large file on the subject, and so a great deal of information was at my disposal. Sadly, most of this material is not of great validity, therefore I have relied on Press Cuttings and statements made by Astronauts to cement my own experiences for compilation of the article. There were also several typing errors arising (sic) from the re-typing of the original script. This may have (or may not have) distracted the reader from the general flow. One more point I would like to raise is that David indicates in his letter that I disagreed with Leonard Stringfield; this is not so. Stringfield is not mentioned in the text. In fact, I happen to think Stringfield is one of the better authors on this subject. I would like to finish by thanking David for suggesting the 'UFO Insight' article by C. D. Allen, 'Have Astronauts Seen Alien Spaceships?'. I have now obtained a copy and added it to my collection. Many thanks,

Keith Knight, Ronkswood, Worcester.

(The above-mentioned article appeared in UFO Insight Vol 2, No 1, available from FUFOR, 277B West Street, Crewe, Cheshire. CW1 3HU., cost 40p. Ed)

Dear Ian,

Thank you for the latest PROBE Report. I was once again very impressed, not only with the presentation and professionalism, but also with the content of the magazine. With one or two exceptions, the articles in all four magazines so far produced by PROBE have been relevant and constructive. I was especially interested in Brian Smith's article "Can a Flying Saucer Fly?". Although I don't necessarily agree with his pro-ETH viewpoint, or his ultimate conclusion, I found his methodical approach very refreshing. All too often the so-called UFO theorists try to explain one unknown (UFOs) in terms of other unknowns, resulting in conclusions which are too far fetched to retain any credibility. Here, Brian has restricted himself to a logical analysis of known quantities, and the result is both ambitious and unambiguous (a rare commodity in ufology). The equations and figures are a bit heavy going, but are at least on record, enabling them to be checked and verified (another rarity!). I would like to see this approach applied to other 'theories' in ufology, to see if they stand up equally well to analysis. Best wishes.

Marty Moffatt, SCUFORI, Swindon, Wilts.

ADVERTISEMENTS:

MAGIC SAUCER. The UFO magazine for children and the young at heart, £2.43 per year (six issues) or 41p per copy, post paid. From 8 Ely Close, Habberley Estate, Kidderminster, Worcs.

WANTED: Any information on Astronaut UFO sightings - all costs reimbursed. Contact Keith Knight, 203 Liverpool Road, Ronkswood, Worcester, Worcs. Tel Worcester 353063.

BACK ISSUES of PROBE and The PROBE Report are still available, except No 2, which is out of print. Each issue 45p plus 15p postage. 16 Marigold Walk, Ashton, Bristol. BS3 2PD.

SIGHTING CATALOGUE 1977 to 1979. £3 plus £1 for statistical tables. £2 the lot to MAUPOG groups. UFO International, 160 Courtney Road, Kingswood, Bristol.

SWINDON CIGAR

Investigated by SCUFORI. Prepared by
Charlie Affleck.

This case involves the apparent observation of one silver cigar-shaped object over Pinhurst, Swindon in Wiltshire, England on 9th March 1980. There was only one witness, a man of 55 years of age who claims to have watched the object travel across the sky for approximately eleven seconds in broad daylight. The case came to the attention of SCUFORI via a telephone call from Mr. Claridge on 18th March 1980. He made this call in direct response to an appeal by SCUFORI in the local paper, the Evening Advertiser, asking for anybody who thought they had seen a UFO to report it to them. This appeal was very fruitful as a large number of reports were received and evaluated.

On 9th March 1980, at 4.50 pm on a sunny afternoon, Mr. Claridge was fixing a post on his back garden shed when, out of the blue, his pet cat 'tapped' him on the head! This strange action by his cat caused Mr. Claridge to look up in the air and in doing so resulted in him seeing what he described as a silver coloured cigar. The witness could not make out any wings or protusions on the object, neither could he hear any noise. The witness then moved as fast as he could to the back door of his house where he saw the object once again. He opened the door and called for his daughter to come and look at the mystery object. By the time he had looked back in the air, a time period of only a few seconds, the object was gone.

This short observation by Mr. Claridge resulted in extensive investigations taking many months to complete. Upon visiting the witness, on 26th March, a number of facts became clear which did not come to light in the RSI form the witness filled in on 21st March. In all, five visits were paid to the witness in order to cross-check information and substantiate the facts of the case. Some of the findings from the visits are as follows:

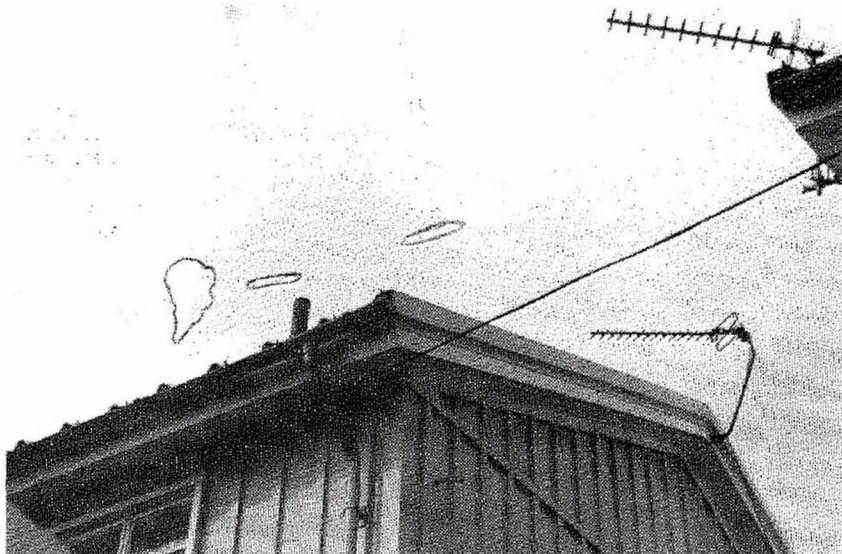
The witness first saw the object at a compass bearing NNW (330°), and at an angle of elevation of 39° . This meant the object appeared to the witness to be about five feet to the left of a pipe on a house next door. The apparent length of the object was the same as a matchstick held at arm's length. The witness re-enacted what took place at the time of the sighting; this not only established that the overall duration of the 'event' was approximately eleven seconds, but that the actual time the witness spent observing the object was only about four to five seconds. It turned out that the rest of the time, the witness was either running from where he first saw the object to the back door of the house or was calling his daughter.

Weather conditions for the time in question were obtained from the Meteorological Office at RAF Lyneham. The weather conditions on that day were cloudy but bright with a temperature of 7.4°C . The wind was blowing at 3 knots at surface level. Visibility was 50kms and relative humidity was 64%. These details were consistent with the information given by the witness.

Information was obtained from RAF Lyneham on any aircraft that were in the air at the time of the sighting. It turned out there were two aircraft in the air at the time: a C130 on route from Lyneham to South Cerney, and secondly a light civilian aircraft transitting to Luton. Both these aircraft were under the control of Lyneham Air Traffic Control. Armed with this information, SCUFORI were able to rule out any powered craft being responsible for a misidentification by the witness. It therefore occurred that the sun (which was low in the sky) reflecting off the body of a glider might have accounted for the sighting. It was to this end that SCUFORI wrote to the Swindon Glider Club and a number of communications were exchanged resulting in SCUFORI visiting the club to obtain some vital information first hand. It was established that there was indeed a glider airborne at the stated time and date, the glider concerned being the 'Blanik' glider piloted by the Chief Flying Instructor. The fuselage was of polished aluminium construction with a length of approximately 7 metres (23ft), and the wings were blue having a length of approximately 18 metres (60ft). If it were not for one contradiction,

this case would have been solved - that contradiction is as follows: When the witness first observed the object, it was at an angle of about 39° elevation, a few seconds and 18 feet later the object was directly above Mr. Claridge. If one presumes the object did move into the cloud bank then the height of the object would be at least 2800 feet. Therefore, either the witness was wrong in his estimation of angles, or the object must have travelled at very high speed - faster than any aircraft.

Conclusion: Due to this contradiction, the classification for this case can only be 'insufficient data'.



ABOVE: Drawing by Mr. Claridge of the object as seen from his position. A cloud is also shown.



LEFT: The actual glider that was airborne at the time of the sighting. The silver fuselage and blue wings could give the appearance of a cigar-shaped object against a blue sky.



TERRY'S SKYWATCH PAGE

A LOOK AT THE SKYWATCH SCENE

One good thing about the crowds on Cradle Hill being small these days, is that you don't get the perishing hoaxers that the large crowds attracted. With the bank holidays, some bright spark nearly always went out of his way to try and fool the bigger gathering.

One such bank holiday two or three years ago, me and a few friends spent the night skywatching at the white gates on Cradle Hill and the only thing seen was a single white light hovering over the West Wilts golf club. The light was flashing on and off at random intervals. After watching this light for roughly half an hour, we decided it was some kind of hoax and it was suggested someone take a closer look. Ian, our editor, and Steve Parker, another skywatcher volunteered. This meant climbing over hedges, barbed-wire fences and tackling muddy fields until they found themselves underneath the light. By this time it had become obvious that it was a kite as they could hear the flapping noise in the wind, but the problem was trying to find the line keeping it there. This took ages because the kite was really high and they had to backtrack against the wind to find where it was tied.

Unfortunately, the line was tied to a bush bang outside the golf club window in full view of the boozed-up members inside, but none of them noticed as Ian and Steve cut the line and made a run for it, dragging the kite behind them still in the air. Pulling the line in as they ran, they eventually arrived back at the hilltop. What had caused the light was a small bulb powered by four HP7 batteries, but what had made it flash so randomly was a complicated electronic circuit - God knows how it worked!

Anyway, the press got to know and the following week printed a story under the title, 'Kite spoofs UFO spotters' which was utter rubbish. It may have fooled the newcomers to the hill, but not the regular skywatchers, but the annoying thing about the whole affair is that this joke got more publicity than a genuine sighting would. We never caught the joker who did it, but I reckon he spent far more time in building it and putting it up than we did taking it down!

Recently, we arranged to meet an old friend on the hill but we couldn't understand why he hadn't reached the top of the hill when we only just passed him coming up. We gave it five minutes and then decided to investigate further. As we set off down the hill we met him half way without his car, and when we asked him what he had done with it he explained that he'd got stuck in mud whilst turning and asked us if we would give him a push. Three of us got behind the car and pushed as he put it in first gear, and as he pulled away, the back wheel on one side spun throwing up mud..... covering Ian from head to toe. I was delighted because it's nearly always me that catches it and it was such a funny sight anyway. The rest of that evening was pretty uneventful but at least it was dry, which was more than I could say for the other Saturday when we might as well have been in Siberia, as six inches of snow fell as we were skywatching. And I used to moan about rain! Still, things can only get better.

NEXT ISSUE: Chasing aliens over the hilltops of Warminster!

THE MAYAN CONNECTION ?

by Brian Palmer.

Credit: Tony Green of SKYSCAN.

The city of Uaxactun (AD328) is the oldest known Mayan city so far discovered, built in the low, humid jungle-bound "El Petén". The low lying hills were artificially levelled, and made into large and small plazas. These were connected by causeways. The principle Temple Pyramid is 27 feet high and is the beginning of pyramid form evolution.

Tikal (AD416) is the largest Mayan city and is just 35 miles from Uaxactun. It lies on an artificially levelled limestone outcrop surrounded by dense forest. The limerock base lies between two ravines which have been converted into reservoirs, spanned by a causeway that also acts as dam, and this was done because of the lack of dependable water, even with high rainfall. There are five separate groups of buildings that cover one square mile, but from here, Tikal stretches several miles beyond in all directions. This city is best known for its monuments which number 83 stelae, 54 altars, some of the finest wood carving in the entire Maya area, and standing in the plaza (which measures 400 x 250 feet), a pyramid that is 229 feet high. At the apex is a small three roomed temple that covers less than 150 square feet. The pyramid contains over 250,000 cubic feet just to hold one small building. There are eight other similarly-sized temple pyramids plus eighty lesser structures, eg palaces. Overall, Tikal has more than 3,000 buildings in less than seven square miles and the city survived from AD416 until AD869. Its existence was first known to the outside world in 1696.

Other reasonably well-known Maya cities are Copán (AD460), Palenque (AD642), Uxmal (AD900), Tulum (AD564), Labná (AD869), Chichén Itzá (AD432-964-1185), Sayil (AD800), Kabah (AD879), Yaxchilan (AD514), Piedras Negras (AD534), and finally San José (AD435).

NOTE. The Mayan name of San José is unknown, and the original name of Tulum was Zama, although both names are of Mayan origin. These are but a few of the Mayan cities that have been discovered, and many explorers suggest that there may well be dozens more overgrown and undiscovered cities of even more importance.

Even though the buildings were large enough to accommodate many families, it must be remembered that the mass of the Mayan people lived in small huts or houses of wood or cane, with thatch roofing. The palaces and similar structures were only living places for the higher officials, High Priests or Rulers. The buildings in these great cities were of very substantial construction that, in most cases was earthquake-proof. Even though the joints between the stones that made up the walls were of remarkable accuracy, they were improved by washing the walls with a limestone slurry. When this dried, it was then painted with the sap from a certain tree which, when dry, produced a hard glaze that could easily be polished or painted to disguise the joints. The majority of the inside of the pyramids was filled with rubble, and then built around with stonework. The tallest of the pyramids is 229 feet high with sides sloping at angles of up to 75 degrees elevation.

All cities, and satellite cities, were connected by roads or causeways which vary in length and width, but are always of the same quality. The longest road starts at Yaxuná (13 miles from Chichén Itzá) and is 62½ miles long and 32 feet wide. This road keeps dead level for its complete length and varies in height above the jungle floor from a few inches up to 32 inches. Many of the Mayan roads have only recently been found by aerial photographs actually searching for suitable ground for oil drilling. These roads are mainly through dense forest or swamps, but some have been traced across the Andes. Some of those going through swampland are built on timber piles, about 18 inches above the surface. The piles are calculated to be about 2,000 years old, and made from the Sapodilla tree, a metal-hard wood. They are still strong today, but the Maya did not reckon on the termites; unfortunately these small creatures are destroying one of the road-building wonders of the world.

Although the Maya were quite adept in the art of writing, all of the surviving books are post eleventh century. They are all in fairly poor condition but the best of them is the surprisingly informative "Books of the Jaguar Priest" (Chilam Balam). It is written in spanish alphabet, but in the Mayan language. This is easily deciphered but the true Mayan writing is still undecipherable. All that is known so far is that Mayan writing is a 'picture puzzle' form and is composed of heiroglyphic symbols (Glyphs). The script is superior to that of the Aztecs but inferior to the Egyptian. Each glyph can have several different meanings which only adds to the complications.

The Maya made canoes from single Cedar logs which could be up to 80 feet long and hold as many as 40 men. With canoes such as these, they opened many trade routes along the coast and also to the islands that were in sight of the mainland. Mayan trade routes have been found to extend up to 3,000 miles. As mathemeticicians, the Maya were unequalled. One calculation in Tikal goes 90 million years into the past, and another in the same location goes back 400 million years. Some calculations went up to 4,000 years into their future (ie AD2,000). The most noteworthy accomplishment of the Maya, besides their calendar was the derivation of a formula to predict an eclipse of the sun or moon. They did not know if the eclipse would be visible in their area, but they knew exactly when such an eclipse was possible.

The Maya had three calendars, the first being the Haab Year. It consisted of 18 periods (months) of 20 days each, plus a terminal period of 5 days called Uayeb (empty or unlucky days). The second was a sacred calendar called the Tzolkin. This consisted of 260 days made up of 13 months with 20 days in each. Finally, the third was the Long Count calendar based on the number of days since the mythical beginning of the Maya era. This was dated as 4 Ahau 8 Cumku, which is the equivalent of either 3,111 or 3,113BC. All of these calendars were calculated up to the year 2,000AD. Just to bring home how accurate the Mayan calculations were, the astronomers of the Maya calculated the synodical revolution of Venus as 584 days: modern astronomers, with the aid of precise instruments get a figure of 583.92 days.

Although the Maya undoubtedly used many 'jungle recipes' of herbs and roots, they were medically very advanced, as is evident by their surgical instruments which are very similar to those used by modern surgeons. These people were a race of farmers whose main crop was maize. Originally relying on the 'slash and burn' method of farming, ie forest trees cut down and burnt, and then the same crop grown year after year, they soon found that the soil was quickly exhausted. Because of this they developed 'cycle' farming, which is used worldwide now. Basically 'cycle' farming is this:- Year 1, grass. Year 2, grazed. Year 3, waste.

The Maya were more superstitious than religious, having at least two gods for each day of the month, plus gods of forest, water, light, dark, heavens etc. Having all these gods to keep happy, you can understand that they were a peaceful people, but they were always quick to defend themselves or their neighbours. This went to the extent of sending reinforcements to neighbouring areas whose population was being threatened.

So far, what you have read are facts about the Mayan race. None are really extraordinary unless you look a little deeper, and then add one or two other snippets of information and a little thought.

The pyramids were originally flat on top, with no temple. This, coupled with the fact that inside one pyramid was found the tomb of a Mayan official, upon which was carved a picture of a man at the controls of a flying craft, could bring this to mind. Perhaps the pyramids were really landing platforms for craft from another planet. When these spacecraft suddenly stopped coming, did the Maya build temples on top of the pyramids so that they could call upon the superior beings, asking them to come again? Also, in Tikal there is a building that looks remarkably like an observatory. Was this to allow them to look for their overdue visitors, or just to observe the planets?

Why should the roads be up to 35 feet wide? Surely for a race who, we are told, had not discovered the wheel, the width was over-generous. But, for some strange reason the children's toys had wheels. Perhaps the Maya had either developed, or been given a gift of something much more advanced. The wheel was not seen in everyday adult life, but some method of transportation was needed to take limestone blocks, weighing many tons, through rain forest and swamp to the site of new cities. Perhaps some sort of flying machine. Which ever way you look at it, a 35 feet wide road is plenty wide enough for a race of 'pedestrians'.

The Russian and American scientists, who have been spending many years trying to decipher the Mayan script, have been heard to say and have been quoted in magazines as saying, that the Mayan writing is like something from "another planet". Many a true word spoken in jest! Although the Maya have been accused of some of the most brutal sacrifices, (removing the hearts of living people), consider their surgical instruments. Maybe these sacrifices were operations totally misunderstood. They could well have been heart transplants. Another amazing fact about the Maya is that skeletons have been recovered that have had successful brain operations carried out on them. This operation was carried out, and the patient recovered at least well enough for new bone tissue to begin growing over the replaced piece of skull. These trepanning operations, I think you would agree, are rather advanced for a race of farmers.

What possible reason could the Maya have for having such a fixation with time? One theory that has been put forward is as follows: The Maya were a race of people, traveling from planet to planet, mining certain metals that they required from whichever world would yield it. Their first base in our solar system was on planet X, (where the present asteroid belt is). After obtaining all useful metal possible from this planet, they moved towards the sun, and found the Earth and moon. Shortly after they had exhausted the moon, and the full potential of the work force brought to bear on our Earth, planet X and their home base was destroyed as the planet broke up due to its loss of gravity, based around its no-longer-existing metal core. With the loss of their main base and all of the transport, the Maya could only send out a distress call to their home planet and wait. The calendars, which were all calculated up to the year AD2,000, stopped at the time when the rescue craft was due to arrive. But owing to development in spacecraft motors, the rescue craft arrived early and returned the surviving Maya to their home. This would solve the mystery of the sudden disappearance from the Earth of the Maya.

Just two other bits of information. When the Apollo spacecrews crashed the Lunar Modules onto the moon's surface, they said that the moon "rang like a bell". Perhaps, almost as if it had been mined and was hollow! The second item is this: there is a legend among the few people who call themselves descendants of the Maya, that the Mayan ruler had a 'rock' that had a man inside who would, at times, appear and talk to the officials. Take a good look at your T.V. screen when it is turned off. Funny how much like a rock it appears.....

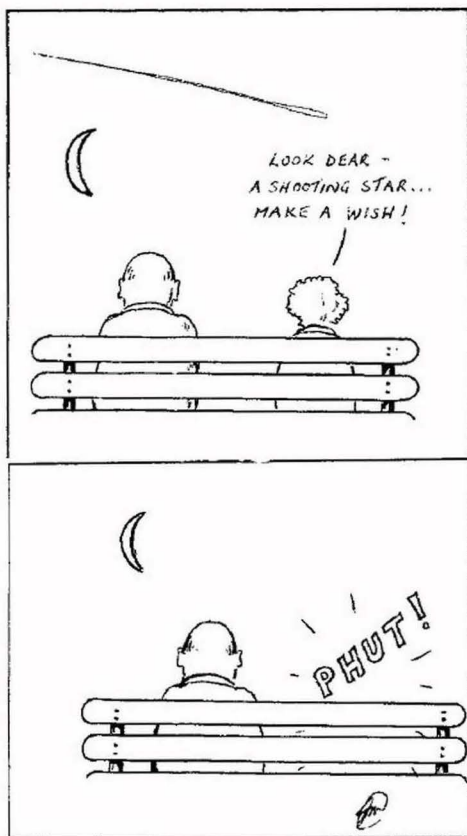
These are just some thoughts for you to read, and perhaps consider, and I feel sure that some consideration for this subject would not be wasted. My thanks must go to such book authors as Victor W. Von Hagan, Michael D. Coe, Eric & Craig Umland, Glyn Daniel, Van Der Veer & Moerman, Leonard Cottrell, David Adamson, C. A. Burland, V. Calvani, T. Patrick Culbert, Kurt Mendelssohn and the SKYSCAN UFO research group. My special thanks also go to Margaret George, without whose help, at least three of the above author's works would not have fallen into my hands.

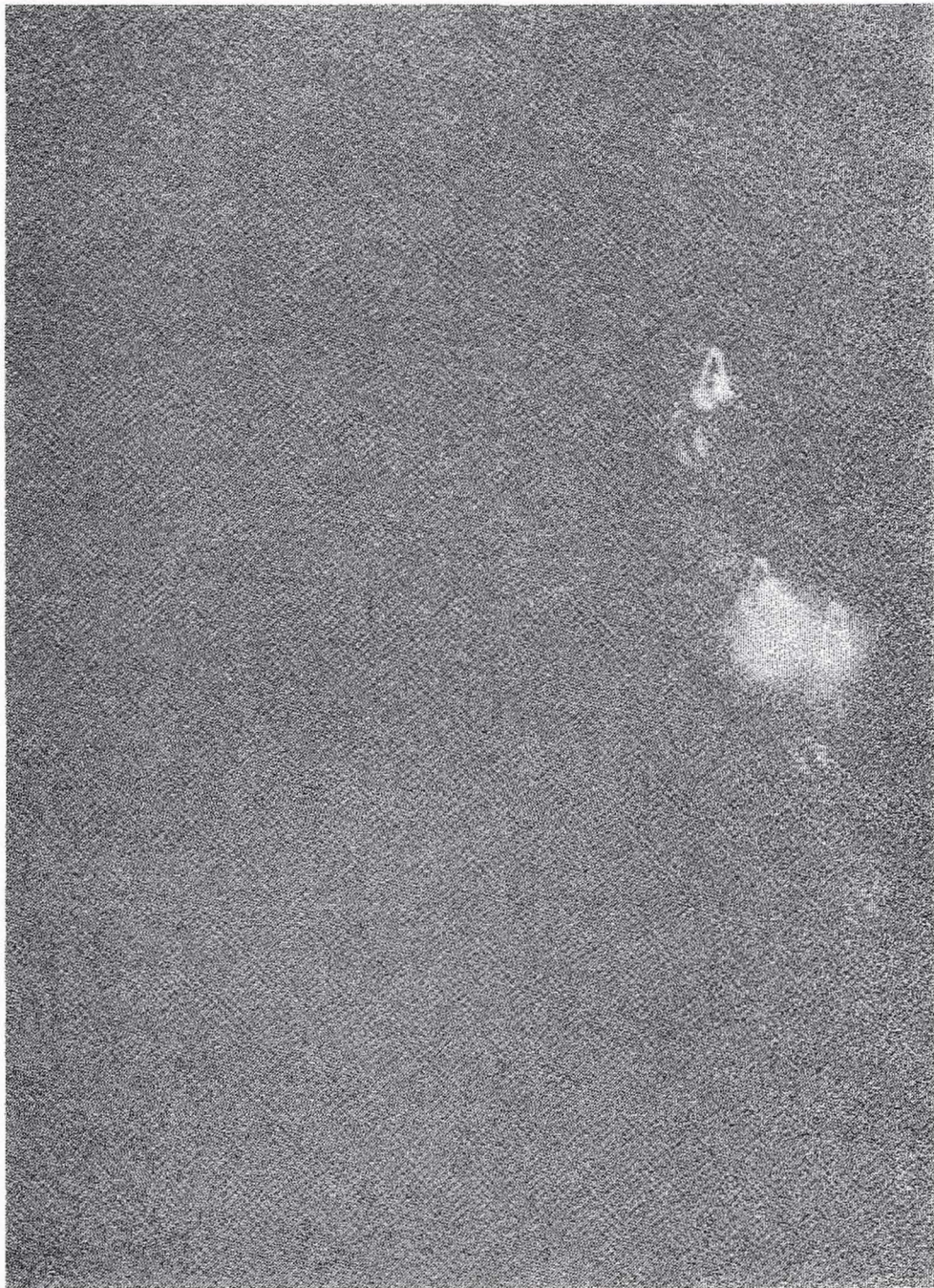
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 UFO NACHRICHTEN. Germany.
 JOURNAL UFO-FORSCHUNG. Germany.
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Cradle Hill Photos — see page 9